

**MINUTES**  
**Conservation Commission Regular Meeting**  
**July 7, 2021, 7:00 p.m.**  
**Room 135, Town Hall, 100 Pocono Road, Brookfield, CT 06804**

**1. Call to Order**

**Chair J. Bronn called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.**

**Present: Chair J. Bronn, Vice Chair J. Blick, M. Carmody, C. DePoi, T. Cappiello, Alternate Member A. Schutte-Bell (joined at 7:28 p.m. via telephone)**

**Also Present: Conservation Director A. Dew, Ex Officio S. Slater and Recording Secretary A. Kennedy**

**Absent: Alternate Members M. Dew and R. Blessey**

**2. Minutes from Previous Meeting:**

- **June 2, 2021**

Chair J. Bronn noted a correction to Agenda item D, name spelling: replace “Jordy” with “Geordie”

**M. Carmody made a motion to accept the minutes from June 2, 2021 as presented, with one correction, as noted. Vice Chair J. Blick seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

**3. Guest and Public Comment**

*Donna Schilling was present.*

D. Schilling discussed her latest correspondence to the Commission regarding the plans for mowing at Happy Landings. She said if they do not plan to have it mowed until the fall, that’s fine. She asked that if there are plans to mow before the fall, could they please consider leaving the area of milkweed, as described in her letter, for the monarchs. Chair J. Bronn said the current plan is to mow at end of the season, as was done last year. He said they are aware of how important the milkweed is for the monarchs. Chair J. Bronn asked her about the bobolink birds in the area. D. Schilling said three weeks ago they were all over the fields, but there are a lot fewer there now, and she expects by the end of next week there will be less. Chair J. Bronn discussed D. Schilling’s previous correspondence regarding wildflower verges and the Pollinator Pathway. He asked where she thought would be a good location for a verge. D. Schilling said any open space area would work.

**4. Correspondence**

**A. Happy Landings Mowing Letter**

- **Happy Landings Mowing Letter from D. Schilling dated June 16, 2021**

**B. Correspondence from Jill Doherty (agenda item added by Chair J. Bronn), Email, Dated June 24<sup>th</sup>**

Vice Chair J. Blick received correspondence from Jill Doherty regarding mowing along the highway. Vice Chair J. Blick suggested J. Doherty contact the First Selectman, who may be able to give her contact information for the State DOT.

**C. Correspondence from Jeff Neary (agenda item added by Chair J. Bronn), Dated June 14<sup>th</sup> and June 22<sup>nd</sup>**

Chair J. Bronn said J. Neary discussed Burr Farm in his June 14<sup>th</sup> correspondence, specifically a marked trail along Lake George Road, that has trees down an is almost impassable. J. Neary asked if that was something he could work on fixing up. Chair J. Bronn said J. Neary also included a map with his correspondence, so the Commission could see the area he is discussing. Chair J. Bronn also noted that he had J. Neary sign another hold harmless agreement for 2021. Chair J. Bronn also discussed the correspondence received dated June 22<sup>nd</sup>, in which J. Neary asks if he could re-open an old exit out of the back of the Gurski Williams Park. Chair J. Bronn said unless anyone has any objections, he will give J. Neary permission to get started on these projects. M. Carmody suggested instructing J. Neary not to open the trail wide enough for an all-terrain vehicle, but just wide enough for passage of someone walking.

**D. Correspondence from Chris Brooks (agenda item added by Chair J. Bronn), Dated June 25<sup>th</sup>**

Chair J. Bronn said C. Brooks is an Eagle Scout and would like to do a project benefitting his community to earn his Eagle Scout Award. C. Brooks said he is interested in helping Old Bridge Bird Sanctuary. He would like to help restore the stairs by the entrance, clearing and/or reforming some trails, building a bench and cleaning up the waterfront area, and possibly adding some bird houses. He would like to do this project later this summer or early fall, and is in the process of finalizing his plan. C. Brooks said he will handle fundraising and purchasing of all supplies and materials. T. Cappiello asked to request that C. Brooks shares any plans or sketches that he may have with the Commission.

**5. Treasurer's Report**

Chair J. Bronn said they have reached July 1<sup>st</sup>, and therefore have begun their new annual budget.

## **6. Old Business**

### **A. Barn Quilt Next Steps**

Chair J. Bronn noted that C. DePoi and M. Carmody met with Bridget O'Hara from the Arts Commission regarding a possible design. C. DePoi said B. O'Hara was very excited and she had been very involved with the New Milford project as well. C. DePoi said B. O'Hara was working on designs and had planned to come to the meeting to present them, but unfortunately, she has an immediate family member in the hospital. B. O'Hara will try to make it to the next meeting. M. Carmody passed out postcards to give the Commission members an idea of what was done in New Milford. Chair J. Bronn discussed possible next steps after choosing a design.

### **B. Gurski Driveway Paving**

Chair J. Bronn said the paving is not completed yet. S. Slater said the Lion's Club had complained about the road, so Public Works did some work there.

### **C. Nabby Road Maintenance**

T. Cappiello said he has been in touch with Pete McPadden and they haven't been able to coordinate a time for him to come look at it, but T. Cappiello sent him some pictures. T. Cappiello said P. McPadden is still interested in the work, and now they just have to find a convenient time for him and coordinating with the Town.

## **7. New Business**

### **A. 16 Dunsinane Road**

Conservation Director A. Dew said she has not gotten any further information from Paul Alconan of Northwest Conservation. Chair J. Bronn said he also called them and they did not have any information for him. Conservation Director A. Dew said she spoke with First Selectman S. Dunn and the Town Attorney about the process if the Conservation Commission wanted to donate some of their open space fund and it would not demand a public meeting, but would go to the First Selectman for his approval.

### **B. Happy Landings Future**

Chair J. Bronn said this is one of their biggest issues. He noted that the grass has not come back, but they haven't received any complaints. The Commission discussed whether or not to keep having the property sprayed. The Commission

also discussed the knapweed problem, and possible ideas going forward. A. Schutte-Bell suggested reaching out to NOFA Northeast Organic Farming Association, to discuss the knapweed problem. A. Schutte-Bell will call them and invite them to attend a meeting. She will also ask at the Audubon Society. C. DePoi will reach out to Topsmead to see what they do to avoid a problem with knapweed.

### **C. BCC Upcoming Event**

Chair J. Bronn discussed the upcoming event on September 11, 2021, 10am - 12pm on the Still River Greenway. He noted they have received approval from Parks & Rec, but the event will not make it into their next brochure. He said they will need to promote the event on their own and noted that A. Schutte-Bell already has confirmed 5 vendors. A. Schutte-Bell discussed the vendors including the Pollinator Pathway, the Wolf Conservation, the Bear Reality and the Audubon Society. Vice Chair J. Blick can provide a portfolio of information on backyard bee keeping. A. Schutte-Bell discussed reaching out to the Lions Club and said she is waiting on additional contact information. She said she has also reached out to the Garden Club, and is waiting for a response. She said she tried to reach out to Mary Wilson from Protector Pollinators, but the email bounced back. Chair J. Bronn will reach out to Summer Hoogenboom from Northwest Conservation regarding wildlife tracking. A. Schutte-Bell said she is also waiting for a response from NOFA Northeast Organic Farming Association regarding participation. Vice Chair J. Blick asked if anyone has reached out to an organization with information about coyotes and bobcats, etc. She said people often seek information regarding general wildlife in the area and how to prevent wildlife from coming into their yards, etc. She asked about Wildlife in Crisis, as one possibility. Vice Chair J. Blick said she will look into someone in that genre and report back. The Commission discussed promoting the event in the Spotlight, the Town website, the Parks & Rec website, the Library, etc.

### **D. Watering Bags**

Vice Chair J. Blick discussed using reusable water bags to water the trees, instead of having to carry water to the location to water them. She noted the bags will have to be refilled using a hose.

**Vice Chair J. Blick made a motion to purchase 4 watering bags at a cost of \$15 - 20 each to put in around the trees planted in April at Gurski. M. Carmody seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

### **E. Property Improvements**

Chair J. Bronn discussed pictures he received from A. Schutte-Bell regarding holes in the walkway around the pond at Williams. He said the walkway has been

neglected for some time, and he will discuss this with Conservation Director A. Dew.

Chair J. Bronn discussed the poison hemlocks at Williams. Vice Chair J. Blick and T. Cappiello met with Green Environs and got an estimate. Vice Chair J. Blick said she asked how the chemical would be applied, and they gave a detailed explanation of the method they use, in order to spot treat the poison hemlocks only. Chair J. Bronn said once they have a date for this work to be done, they can post a sign, informing visitors.

**Chair J. Bronn made a motion to approve a \$300 estimate to Green Environs to cut down and spray the stems of poison hemlocks at Eriksen Farm. Vice Chair J. Blick seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**

#### **F. Compost Creation Program**

Chair J. Bronn said the representative for this program, was supposed to attend the meeting, but could not be here tonight. Vice Chair J. Blick said Thomas Peter Lezin would like to start a compost program and she told him her daughter did something similar at Huckleberry School. Vice Chair J. Blick said he asked her for information, and he would like to reach out to her daughter for more guidance on the process.

#### **G. 43 Old Bridge**

Conservation Director A. Dew said this is the possible purchase of part of a property next to Old Bridge Sanctuary. She said a woman is interested in gifting a chunk of property, which would mean they would have to pay for a survey and attorney's fees, which would be approximately \$10,000 to \$12,000.

### **8. Tabled Items**

M. Carmody asked about Gurski Homestead and Barn. She asked what will happen to this property and whether or not this is in the Conservation Commission's jurisdiction. Chair J. Bronn said the house has broken windows. M. Carmody said this should be put on the agenda - Future of Gurski Homestead and Barn, to discuss further. S. Slater discussed this as a possible use for some of the money the Town is receiving from the Federal government. She said they are developing a committee to discuss possible uses for the funds, based on the information received in the guidance from the government.

### **9. Adjournment**

**Chair J. Bronn made a motion to adjourn at 8:34 p.m. Vice Chair J. Blick seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.**